

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 MCT-01
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-----074764 111402Z /20

O R 111315Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6568
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
DIA WASHDC
AMEMBASSH KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
INFO AMCONSUL KADUNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L NDJAMENA 1042

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS, PINS, CD
SUBJECT: CURRENT SITUATION IN CHAD

SUMMARY: THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR AND I HAD LENGHTY
REVIEW OF PRESENT SITUATION IN CHAD ON MARCH 11. WE ARE
ESSENTIALLY IN AGGREEMENT ON THE FOLLOWING FOUR POINTS:
(AL FRENCH REINFORCEMENTS NOW STATIONED IN FIELD WITH
CHADIAN ARMY SHOULD STABLIZE MILITARY SITUATION:
(B) THERE REMAINS STRONG QUESTION WHETHER REBEL LEADER
GOUKOUNI WILL PARTICIPATE IN PROPOSED
MARCH 21 MEETING:
(C) THERE IS REAL THREAT OF INTERNAL SHAKEUP WITHIN SMC,
LED BY OR AIMED AT FOREIGN MINISTER KAMOUGOUE: AND
(D) IN VIEW OF STABILIZATION MILITARY SITUATION,
ANTI-GOVERNMENT AND ANTI-EUROPEAN TERRORISM IN
NDJAMENA IS PROBABLY NEXT STEP IF REBELS DESIRE
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TO CONTINUE ACTION AGAINST GOVERNMENT.

1. A FRENCH FORCE OF PARACHUTISTS AND
LEGIONNAIRES IS NOW INPLACE IN MOUSSORO, MONGO,
AND ABECHÉ. FORCES IN MOUSSORO HAVE AT THEIR DISPOSAL
AN ARMORED CAR SQUADRON AS WELL AS TWO ALOUETTE
HELICOPTERS AND ONE PUMA. ABECHÉ HAS BEEN DIRECTLY

GARRISONED BY A FRENCH GROUP THAT HAS UNDERTAKEN PROTECTION OF THE AIRFIELD. THEY ALSO HAVE TWO ALOUETTES AND ONE PUMA. FORCE IN MONGO IS SMALLER AND MORE IN THE NATURE OF A SMALL RECONNAISSANCE AND STRIKE FORCE. FOUR TRANSAL CARGO PLANES ARE PERMANENTLY STATIONED IN NDJAMENA FOR SUPPORT OF CHADIAN ARMY (IN RARE DISPLAY OF CONFUSION OF AFRICA SCENE, FRENCH PLANES ARE NOW IN DOUALA TO PICK UP RUSSIAN AMMUNITION FOR CHADIANS). FRENCH AMBASSADOR SAYS THAT WELCOME OF CHADIANS TO THE INCOMING FRENCH WAS WARMER THAN ANYTHING HE COULD REMEMBER SINCE HIS ARRIVAL HERE SEVERAL YEARS AGO. HE SAYS YOUNGER CHADIAN OFFICERS ARE TALKING MORE ABOUT POLITICS AND ARE SEVERELY CRITICIZING MALLOUM AND HIS COLLEAGUES FOR HAVING TERMINATED THE FRENCH MILITARY AGREEMENT IN 1975.

2. BOTH FRENCH AMBASSADOR AND I ARE STILL AT A LOSS TO PREDICT QADHAFI'S NEXT MOVES. APPARENTLY, TALKS LAST WEEK IN TRIPOLI WITH VICE PRESIDENT DJIME WENT SMOOTHLY BUT PRODUCED NOTHING OF SIGNIFICANCE. IN EARLIER TALKS WITH MALLOUM, QADHAFI WAS EVIDENTLY IN HIS MOST CHARMING FORM AND CONSTATNLY USED THE ARGUMENT THAT MALLOUM WAS GREAT AND WISE LEADER AND IT WAS ONLY THE ROGUES LIKE KAMOUGUE AROUND HIM THAT WERE CAUSING PROBLEMS. BOTH MALLOUM AND CONFIDENTIAL

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GOUARA LASSOU WERE APPARENTLY TAKEN IN BY THE ARGUMENT; THE LATTER MAY ALSO HAVE BEEN INFLUENCED BY A DIRECT FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION TO HIS FUTURE WELFARE. FRENCH SOURCES IN TRIPOLI ALL DOUBT IF GOUKOUNI WILL BE ATTENDING MARCH 21 MEETING. HOWEVER, THIS MAY BE MORE IN THE NATURE OF A DELAYING TACTIC THAN A LONG TERM REFUSAL TO NEGOTIATE.

3. FRENCH AMBASSADOR SAID THAT MALLOUM HAD ACTUALLY ASKED HIM WHAT HE WAS GOING TO DO ABOUT KAMOUGUE AND SAID HE COULDN'T STAY IN THE GOVERNMENT IF ANY COMPROMISE WERE REACHED. AS REPORTED EARLIER, KAMOUGUE IS WELL AWARE OF HIS POSITION AS A POSSIBLE SACRIFICIAL LAMB AND RESENTS IT BITTERLY. RUMORS OF IMPENDING COUP ARE ALMOST A DAILY EVENT AND IT IS CLEAR THAT KAMOUGUE IS TRYING TO FIND A BASIS OF POWER SUFFICIENT FOR HIM TO CHANGE THE COMPOSITION OF PRESENT GOVERNMENT. DISCONTENT OF YOUNGER OFFICERS WITH MALLOUM GOVERNMENT MAY GIVE HIM SUCH AN OPPORTUNITY: BUT ON THE OTHER HAND, THEY MAY BE EQUALLY DISILLUSIONED WITH HIM AND BE SEARCHING FOR A NEW FACE.

4. AS MILITARY SITUATION SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN STABILIZED AT THE MOMENT BY THE ARRIVAL OF FRENCH MEN AND EQUIPMENT, IT WOULD APPEAR THE NEXLOGICAL STEP FOR THE REBELS, SHOULD THEY DECIDE TO CONTINUE THEIR CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT RATHER THAN NEGOTIATE IN EARNEST, WOULD BE THE INSTITUTION OF A CAMPAGN OF TERROR AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT AND EUROPEANS IN NDJAMENA. BOTH FRENCH AMBASSADOR AND I HAVE RECEIVED DRIBS AND DRABS OF INFORMATION ALONG THIS LINE. HOWEVER, NO CONCRETE FORM IS AS YET IN VIEW.

5. IN MORE GENERAL REMARKS, AMBASSADOR ALSO
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SAID IF FRENCH FORCES NOW IN CHAD WERE NOT SUFFICIENT, MORE WOULD BE SENT. HE DOUBTED IF THE OUTCOME OF FRENCH ELECTIONS WOULD AFFEECT FRANCE'S IMMEDIATE SUPPORT OF CHAD (HE NOTED IN THIS REGARD THAT MITTERRAND HAD NO USE FOR QADHAFI). HE ASKED IF THERE WERE ANY FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS ON US ASSISTANCE FOR CHAD, AND SAID HE BELIEVED IT EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT GOVERNMENT GET SOOE SIGN OF OUR SUPPORT. I TOLD HIM WE WERE STILL LOOKING FOR SOME AVENUE OF APPROACH. BRADFORD

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TAGS: MOPS, PINS, CD, (GOUKOUNI)
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